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to his religious duties. He received the rite of confirmation, and through life was a devout adherent to the Christian doctrine and discipline.

The character of Mr. Allston's religious feelings may be gathered, incidentally, from many of his writings. It is a subject to be treated with the reserve and delicacy with which he himself would have had it invested. Few minds have been more thoroughly imbued with belief in the reality of the unseen world; few have given more full assent to the truth, that "the things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal." This was not merely an adopted opinion, a conviction imposed upon his understanding; it was of the essence of his spiritual constitution, one of the conditions of his rational existence. To him, the Supreme Being was no vague, mystical source of light and truth, or an impersonation of goodness and truth themselves; nor, on the other hand, a cold rationalistic notion of an unapproachable executor of natural and moral laws. His spirit rested in the faith of a sympathetic God. His belief was in a Being as infinitely minute and sympathetic in his providences, as unlimited in his power and knowledge. Nor need it be said, that he was a firm believer in the central truths of Christianity, the Incarnation and Redemption; that he turned from unaided speculation to the inspired record and the visible Church; that he sought aid in the sacraments ordained for the strengthening of infirm humanity, and looked for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

After a second residence of seven years in Europe, he returned to America in 1818, and again made Boston his home. There, in a circle of warmly attached friends, surrounded by a sympathy and admiration which his elevation and purity, the entire harmony of his life and pursuits, could not fail to create, he devoted himself to his art, the labor of his love.

This is not the place to enumerate his paintings, or to speak of his character as an artist. His general reading he continued to the last, with the earnestness of youth. As he retired from society, his taste inclined him to metaphysical studies, the more, perhaps, from their contrast with the usual occupations of his mind. He took particular pleasure in works of devout Christian speculation, without, however, neglecting a due proportion of strictly devotional literature. These he varied by a constant recurrence to the great epic and dramatic masters, and occasional reading of the earlier and the living novelists, tales of wild romance and lighter fiction, voyages and travels, biographies and letters. Nor was he without a strong interest in the current politics of his own country and of England, as to which his principles were highly conservative.

Upon his marriage with the daughter of the late Judge Dana, in 1830, he removed to Cambridge, and soon afterwards began the preparation of a course of lectures on Art, which he intended to deliver to a select audience of artists and men of letters in Boston. Four of these he completed. Rough drafts of two others were found among his papers, but not in a state fit for publication. In 1841, he published his tale of "Monaldi," a production of his early life. The poems in the present volume, not included in the volume of 1813, are, with two exceptions, the work of his later years. In them, as in his paintings of the same period, may be seen the extreme attention to finish, always his characteristic, which, added to increasing bodily pain and infirmity, was the cause of his leaving so much that is unfinished behind him.

His death occurred at his own house, in Cambridge, a little past midnight on the morning of Sunday, the ninth of July, 1843. He had finished a day and week of labor in his studio, upon his great picture of Belshazzar's Feast; the fresh paint denoting that the last touches of his pencil were given to that glorious but melancholy monument of the best years of his later life. Having conversed with his retiring family with peculiar solemnity and earnestness upon the obligation and beauty of a pure spiritual life, and on the realities of the world to come, he had seated himself at his nightly employment of reading and writing, which he usually carried into the early hours of the morning. In the silence and solitude of this occupation, in a moment, "with touch as gentle as the morning light," which was even then approaching, his spirit was called away to its proper home.

#### TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

In laying this number of the Bulletin before the subscribers to the New England Art Union, we feel it due to them to make some statement of our proceedings thus far, and to say something of our future intentions.

When we went into operation about the first of January, 1851, it was thought that we should be able to make the first distribution near the season of the fall festival, Thanksgiving; but, being wholly ignorant how long it would take to get organized, and to bring the institution fully before the public, we did not allow ourselves sufficient time to accomplish the objects we had in view; consequently we are now compelled to extend the day of distribution to the first Tuesday in April next. Another reason for extending the time is, that our engraving cannot possibly be finished before April, and it is extremely desirable to be able to give it to the subscribers, at or near the time of the general distribution.

The monthly issue of a Bulletin has caused much debate, and we believe it is generally conceded that, as it will divert so much of the funds from their legitimate object, viz., the encouragement of artists, it will be better to omit it, and only issue an occasional one, when there is a necessity for it. We think we utter the sentiment of nearly all our subscribers, when we say that they would much prefer to increase the number of chances for paintings, or other works of art, to receiving a monthly Bulletin. We wish to husband our means as much as is practicable, in order to send forth to our subscribers as many works of art as is possible.

This is the plan of the London Art Union, the oldest and therefore the most experienced of all the Art Unions. That institution sets the example of a careful, steady, and dignified course, and bends all its energies to the advancement of art, and the encouragement of native artists. This institution we profess to follow; our plan is like theirs, which was thought, after mature investigation of the different schemes, to be much the best, as being most likely to effect more in the quarter designed than any other.

The great objects of our institution are, to give encouragement to artists, and to disseminate a general taste for works of art, throughout our country. There is unquestionably as much talent in the United States as in any other part of the world, and this only needs a fostering hand to bring forth glorious results. In Europe, artists have the patronage of the very wealthy; there

are many overgrown estates where the possessors can expend any amount; when they become patrons of art, they have it in their power to do all that is desired. Here it is far otherwise; we have few, if any, very wealthy persons, we mean in comparison with those on the other side; consequently we must depend upon the public at large, where every one is able to contribute the small sum we desire to enable us to carry out our plan, and he is sure of receiving in return what should be considered an equivalent for the amount invested.

In furtherance of our plan, we have established a free Gallery of Paintings, where the public are invited to come and study works of art, and where all those who wish to purchase paintings will find one of the finest collections in the country to select from. They will there see the works of different artists, side by side, and can better select than they could by going to the different studios, as all our artists are invited to send their works here, and the invitation is very generally responded to, as the walls of our Gallery will testify.

It is thought that the government of the institution have no right to expend any of their funds in the purchase of a building, or any fixed property, as this would be drawing from our present patrons to favor those that shall come after them; consequently they have decided to hire rooms for their accommodation, and by so doing, make each year pay its own expenses, and no more. In this connection we have the pleasure to state, that we have enlarged our Gallery, and made very considerable additions to the paintings, and with these increased facilities for business, we trust we shall have a full share of public favor.

Our undertaking, thus far, has been eminently successful, and, we believe, without precedent in the history of Art Unions. We think, in no instance, before our own, has any Art Union been able to give to subscribers an engraving the first year. Ours will not only give to subscribers a very superior engraving, and an occasional Bulletin, but will also distribute chances for paintings.

#### THE PROGRESS OF PAINTING IN THE UNITED STATES.

That the art of painting has made rapid progress in this country, during the last ten years, there can be no doubt in the mind of the intelligent observer. It has received an impetus in a direction that cannot fail to carry it to a height honorable to any age or country, if it be but properly fostered and encouraged. A degree of excellence that once satisfied our artists and amateurs, is no longer tolerated, for the watchword of our young aspirants is—onward.

Many young men have made pilgrimages to the various schools of art in Europe,—have gazed with rapture on the splendors of Titian, or purity of Raphael, in Italy; with wonder upon the productions of Lessing, Cornelius, and Achenbach, and all the realities of the Germans; and with equal astonishment upon the necromancers of the French school, who, like Diaz, Couture, and others, seem to transform, by the magic powers of their pencil, the dull pigments with which they work, to molten gold and silver.

Imbued with ideas of truth and beauty, and with an ardent love of nature, many have returned with all the enthusiasm of youth, to impart their knowledge to others and toil on in the

difficult road to perfection. They go out by companies to the open fields, seeking there the true impress of nature. They penetrate the dark wood and reveal its mysteries, its treasures of venerable primeval trees and broken mossy rocks, its sparkling streams and glancing cascades. Beautiful sequestered nooks and wild rocky glens, unknown to all but them, become their dwelling places for days and weeks, until all the wild beauty becomes a portion of their being. Day after day finds them sitting before some massive pile of granite, studying intently the broken angular forms, the varied tones of gray and richly tinted mosses. Again, some hoary monarch of the forest, whose arms are ragged, and whose trunk is scored with a thousand rough markings, claims all their enthusiasm. They draw with care, the beach, birch, the maple, oak, and elm, in the full maturity of their leafy beauty.

They climb our hill sides and strive to catch the hues of the off-stretching meadows and airy tints of the distant mountains. They note the broken, rolling chains of clouds and their pearly shadows as they chase along the plains. The study of the picturesque forms of our wild scenery, in all its varying phases, becomes a daily joy. All this study is done with true devotion and earnestness, and surely with such serious feeling to actuate them, we may expect to see arise in our country some great interpreters of the mysteries and truths of nature. This earnestness should be encouraged by all who can understand and feel those truths.

Traditions of old schools and mannered conventionalities are fast becoming obsolete in all branches of art, and the love for those dark unmeaning canvasses, dignified with the names of "Old Masters," must soon pass away, for, in this age of truth and fact, they cannot exist, side by side, with the representations of nature in her freshness and beauty.

Our citizens, through Art Unions and other channels, should encourage this new feeling, for it must lead to great results. The *realities* of nature are what the mind craves—realities, that, when touched by the hand of genius, become clothed with wonderful poetic beauty. Schools should be established in this city, where the student may draw incessantly from the glorious perfections of the antique, and familiarize himself with the symmetry and grace of the nude figure. The want of something of this kind is greatly felt in Boston, by those who begin to perceive that nothing can cover a deficient drawing.

We have talent and enthusiasm enough amongst us, and there is no reason why a Boston School of Art should not develop that talent, and produce men who may be able to stand in the foremost rank of the artists of our country.

#### TO AMERICAN ARTISTS.

The Gallery of the New England Art Union is intended as a place of deposit, where American Artists may send their works for sale. At the annual distribution, those entitled can select from said Gallery, or order a picture at their option, as provided in the regulations.

Artists sending their Paintings, or other works of Art, are required to forward a description and the price of their work,—also to pay for transportation.

No commission will be charged to any artist for the sale of his or her works.